



The League of Michigan Bicyclists

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First, I would like to thank Representative Byrnes and Representative Switalski for their continued leadership on the issue of Complete Streets.

My name is John Lindenmayer. I am the Associate Director of the League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) and am here today representing the approximate two million bicyclists in the state of Michigan. On behalf of the cycling community, LMB strongly supports HB 6151 and 6152.

For far too long we have built many of our roads with only automobiles in mind, often at the expense of bicyclists, pedestrians and those with disabilities. These particular roadway users tend to be the most vulnerable, meaning they are most at risk when involved in accidents with automobiles. Complete Streets ensure that future road projects provide safe accommodations for everyone.

According to the National Household Travel Survey, half of all trips are three miles or less, but fewer than 2 percent of those trips are made by bicycle, while 72 percent of them are driven. Even though these trips are extremely bikeable and walkable, people are opting out of these healthy travel modes for one simple reason...safety. If people don't feel safe, even if it is for a single block out of a three or five mile trip, they will choose to drive.

If properly planned for from the very inception of a road project, simple features such as bike lanes, wide shoulders and other basic design elements can save the lives of bicyclists at little to no cost to the state and local government.

According to the Office of Highway Safety Planning, 4120 pedestrians and bicyclists were involved in motor vehicle crashes in 2008 alone, and 139 were killed. More Complete Streets throughout Michigan could have helped to reduce the number of serious injuries and potentially could have been the difference between life and death for some of these individuals.

I am also here today in the capacity as Co-chair of the Michigan Complete Streets Coalition, a growing partnership of over 65 diverse organizations and businesses, including bicycle shops and clubs, health and fitness groups, land use experts, environmental advocates, the disability and aging community, architects and planners, transit advocates, and more.

The wide diversity of Complete Streets supporters speaks volumes towards the overwhelming desire for safer roads in Michigan.

In addition to these various interest groups, there is broad public support for Complete Streets from individuals all across this state. As each of you knows, nearly 500 emails have been addressed to this Committee just in the past two weeks expressing support for these bills. Another 650 individuals have signed an online petition asking MDOT, road agencies and local arms of government to adopt Complete Streets policies, and more sign on by the day.



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I would also like to also stress that this is not just happening in Michigan. Over 130 jurisdictions across the country, including 24 states, have adopted some sort of Complete Streets policy. This includes our Midwest neighbors such as Wisconsin, Illinois and just a few days ago, Minnesota. This also includes local units of government closer to home including Lansing, Jackson, Flint & Genesee County, and many other communities are in the process of doing the same.

In addition to these local efforts, there is also national Complete Streets legislation currently before Congress. Earlier this month the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity, headed by First Lady Michelle Obama, released a new report and action plan to end childhood obesity in a generation. The report specifically recommends Complete Streets.

In closing, I would like to share an excerpt from USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood's website regarding a policy statement directed at all road agencies that he signed in March of this year.

"Today, I want to announce a sea change. People across America who value bicycling should have a voice when it comes to transportation planning. This is the end of favoring motorized transportation at the expense of non-motorized.

We are integrating the needs of bicyclists in federally-funded road projects. We are discouraging transportation investments that negatively affect cyclists and pedestrians. And we are encouraging investments that go beyond the minimum requirements and provide facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

What Secretary LaHood is talking about is Complete Streets. I ask that you follow his guidance and pass HB 6151 & 6152 out of this Committee.

Thank you for your time.

John Lindenmayer
Associate Director
League of Michigan Bicyclists